



# All Pueblo Council of Governors

Officers:  
James R. Mountain, Chairman  
Dominic Gachupin, Vice-Chairman  
Governor Arden Kucate, Secretary

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
April 10, 2025

## ALL PUEBLO COUNCIL OF GOVERNORS APPLAUDS REINTRODUCTION OF LEGISLATION TO PROTECT CHACO CANYON

ALBUQUERQUE, N.M. – The All Pueblo Council of Governors (APCG), representing the 20 Pueblos of New Mexico and one in Texas, proudly reaffirms its support for the permanent protection of federal lands in the Greater Chaco Region. With the reintroduction of a bill to withdraw these lands from future oil and gas leasing, Pueblo leaders highlight their longstanding efforts to safeguard Chaco Canyon—a place of immeasurable cultural, spiritual, and historical importance.

For countless generations, Pueblos have carried forward the teachings and traditions that originated in Chaco Canyon. The APCG has led advocacy efforts to protect this UNESCO World Heritage Site and the broader 10-mile zone from encroaching energy development. Below are statements from Pueblo Governors, along with Chairman James R. Mountain of the APCG, underscoring both the urgency of this legislation and heartfelt appreciation for congressional champions who stand alongside Tribal communities:

Governor Charles Riley, Pueblo of Acoma

“Chaco Canyon holds the footprints and fingerprints of our ancestors. By reintroducing legislation to permanently protect these federal lands, our congressional partners honor our living heritage, and the centuries of prayers offered to safeguard it. This is not only about preserving an archaeological wonder—it’s about ensuring our ancestral gifts remain intact for future generations.”

Governor Eugene Jiron, Pueblo of Isleta

“The 10-mile protection area around Chaco is an affirmation of our prayers and decades of collaboration. We thank the bill’s sponsors for standing with us to safeguard what our ancestors preserved for millennia.”

Governor George Shendo, Jr., Pueblo of Jemez

“Generations of Pueblo leaders have worked tirelessly—within the APCG and beyond—to ensure Chaco’s legacy remains intact. Today, we continue that journey, confident this legislation will protect our sacred sites and guide the stewardship of Chaco Canyon and the Greater Chaco Region.”

Governor Harry Antonio, Jr., Pueblo of Laguna

“By permanently withdrawing these lands from mineral leasing, we ensure that our children will inherit the same cultural richness we have cherished. We thank our congressional partners for reintroducing a bill that respects our living heritage.”



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Acoma	Governor Jenelle Roybal, Pueblo of Pojoaque “Chaco Canyon is not merely an archaeological wonder—it is a part of the origin and history of Pueblo people. We offer gratitude to our sponsors who recognize that true progress must include honoring these ancient footprints.”
Cochiti	
Isleta	Governor Anthony Ortiz, Pueblo of San Felipe “Whenever we gather at Chaco, we are reminded of the teachings passed down through centuries. This bill honors those teachings by ensuring that future generations can also walk these lands in reverence.”
Jemez	
Laguna	
Nambe	Governor Christopher Moquino, Pueblo of San Ildefonso “We celebrate the renewed efforts to enshrine Chaco’s protection in law. Each step reflects decades of consultation, collaboration, and unwavering belief that cultural landscapes deserve our utmost respect.”
Ohkay Owingeh	
Picuris	Governor Felix L. Chaves, Pueblo of Sandia “Reintroducing legislation by New Mexico congressional delegation echoes the core message of the greater Chacon Canyon...protecting and preserving over 110 years by the federal government, the UNESCO World Heritage group, and indigenous people of the Southwest.”
Pojoaque	
Sandia	Governor Myron Armijo, Pueblo of Santa Ana “It is our sacred obligation to protect the cultural resources that define who we are. Chaco Canyon is vitally important for Santa Ana, as it is a significant site on our migration path and occupies a prominent position in our oral history. Assuring its protection from commercial resource development is essential to maintaining our culture and religion. This legislation goes a long way to provide that assurance, and we see its passage as critically important to the preservation of our culture.”
San Felipe	
San Ildefonso	
Santa Ana	
Santa Clara	Governor James Naranjo, Pueblo of Santa Clara “Years of tribally led cultural research prove how deeply we remain connected to Chaco. Permanently safeguarding this region is crucial for preserving not just our artifacts and sites, but also our living traditions.”
Santo Domingo	
Taos	Governor Edwin Concha, Pueblo of Taos “Chaco’s towering structures remind us of the amazing beauty, resilience, and the intellectual capacity our ancestors had when they built the Chaco civilization. Today, with this legislation, we continue their work, ensuring that there is balance to any proposed development and protections to prevent erasing the stories etched into these canyon walls.”
Tesuque	
Ysleta del Sur	
Zia	
Zuni	



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**Acoma** Governor Lambert Pino, Pueblo of Zia  
"Each sunrise at Chaco is a reminder of our ancestors' guidance. We stand firmly with our fellow Pueblos and the APCG in thanking our senators and representatives for championing permanent protection of these homelands."

**Cochiti**  
**Isleta** Governor Arden Kucate, Pueblo of Zuni  
"The vision of our elders was clear: preserve the land so future generations may learn and thrive. In reintroducing this bill, we affirm a heritage that unites Pueblo communities and offers wisdom to the wider world."

**Jemez**  
**Laguna** Chairman James R. Mountain, All Pueblo Council of Governors  
"This legislation reflects the APCG's long-standing commitment to protect Chaco Canyon and the Greater Chaco Region. Through countless meetings, cultural resource studies, and tireless advocacy, we have guided this effort forward. We extend our profound appreciation to Senator Ben Ray Luján, Representative Teresa Leger Fernández, our New Mexico Congressional Delegation, and all who stand with our Pueblos in ensuring these sacred landscapes remain a source of inspiration and cultural continuity for generations to come."

**Nambe**  
**Ohkay Owingeh**  
**Picuris**  
**Pojoaque** **About the All Pueblo Council of Governors**  
Established in 1598, the All Pueblo Council of Governors (APCG) comprises the leadership of the 20 Pueblos in New Mexico and one in Texas. APCG's mission is to protect and promote the social, cultural, and traditional well-being of its member Pueblos, working in close partnership with federal, state, and local institutions to safeguard sacred lands, languages, and lifeways.

**Sandia**  
**San Felipe**  
**San Ildefonso** For more information or to schedule interviews, please contact Jordyn Atencio at 505-212-7041 or [jatencio@indianpueblo.org](mailto:jatencio@indianpueblo.org).

**Santa Ana**  
**Santa Clara**  
**Santo Domingo**

**Taos**  
**Tesuque**

**Ysleta del Sur**  
**Zia**

**Zuni**